

Janet's Law

A New Jersey act concerning sudden cardiac events and schools

Overview

Starting September 1, 2014 all New Jersey schools K thru 12, public and non-public are required to have automated external defibrillators (AED's) on site in close proximity to the school and athletic fields, have an appropriate number of staff trained in CPR / AED, and an Emergency Action Plan in place.

These requirements have been placed into New Jersey law as a result of a New Jersey's family campaign to local communities and politicians ensuring a safer environment for athletes after their daughter "Janet Zilinski" lost her life to "sudden cardiac arrest".

Sudden Cardiac Arrest occurs when the hearts electrical system suddenly malfunctions. The hearts "normal rhythm" can be interrupted due to many things, some of which include...an undetected heart condition, or a sudden blow to the chest i.e. hockey puck, baseball / lacrosse ball.

Having an AED available with trained individuals to perform CPR / AED can dramatically increase an individual's survival rate.

Time is critical:

- Once the heart stops...brain damage can occur within minutes
- Effective CPR helps to circulate oxygenated blood to vital organs
- For every minute the use of an AED is delayed, the survival rate decreases by 10%

Immediate action and entrance into the "cardiac chain of survival" are key components to education and training. They include: early recognition and access to the Emergency Medical System / early CPR / early defibrillation / early advanced medical care.

References:

www.americanredcross.org

www.thejanetfund.org

http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2012/Bills/AL12/51_.PDF Assembly Bill (2012), No. 1608

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